and in many other States. Today, this kind of work is being done by another Member of our House, who was here till recently, in Chitrakut. So, there are different experiments of reaching the poor. We should go with them and not just go on repeating that, 'yes; there is one system and that should be enlarged and so on and so forth.' I am all for the system, but with improvements. Thank you.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

The status of implementation of recommendations contained in the second, third, fourth and fifth reports of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): Sir, I lay a statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Reports of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence (14th Lok Sabha).

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION

Public Distribution System in the country - *Contd.*

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA (Karnataka): Thank you very much, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to speak on this important subject of the Public Distribution System.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIAN) in the Chair]

Sir, while expressing my views on the functioning of the Public Distribution System, I would like to say that the PDS is a major instrument of the Government's economic policy for ensuring availability of foodgrains to the people at the affordable prices, as well as for ensuring the food security for the poor. The PDS, with a network of 4.77 lakh fair price shops, is, perhaps, the largest distribution network of its kind in the world. This huge network can play a major meaningful role only if the system translates the micro-level self-sufficiency in the production of foodgrains into micro-level self-sufficiency in ensuring the availability of food for the poor households.